

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

TOM CAMPBELL

(R) 2nd Legislative District



REPORT ON THE 2004 SESSION

*Serving the citizens of
Graham, Spanaway, Roy,
McKenna, Eatonville, Orting,
Puyallup's South Hill,
Yelm and Rainier*

OLYMPIA OFFICE:

240 John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
360-786-7912

HOME:

P.O. Box 443
Spanaway, WA 98387

E - MAIL:

campbell_to@leg.wa.gov

INTERNET:

[http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/
campbell.htm](http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/campbell.htm)

HOUSE COMMITTEE

ASSIGNMENTS:

Transportation
Health Care
Judiciary
Joint Select Committee on
Military and Veteran's Affairs

Spring 2004

Dear friends,

The Legislature got quite a bit done during its recent 60-day session. Some long-awaited progress was made in the areas of transportation, health care and public safety. No new taxes were adopted, which can only help our economy. There were disappointments, but I think the good outweighed the not-so-good.

Thanks to the many hundreds of you who took the time to answer the issue survey I mailed in February, and all of you who gave up part of a Saturday to attend one of my town hall meetings during the session. Government works best when people get involved, and the citizens of the 2nd District are certainly involved!

Now that the session is over, I'll be out around the district talking with people a lot in the coming months. If you see me, please say hello, and share your thoughts with me. Also, you can reach me through my legislative e-mail address, get a message to me via the toll-free legislative hotline, or put a letter in the mail to me. It has been a great privilege to again serve as your state representative these past two years.

Sincerely,

Rep. Tom Campbell

P.S. – Because this is an election year, state law says I can't send you another newsletter like this until after the November election. However, I am allowed to correspond with you about specific issues, so don't hesitate to get in touch!

YELM LOOP JOINS CROSS-BASE HIGHWAY ON FUNDING LIST

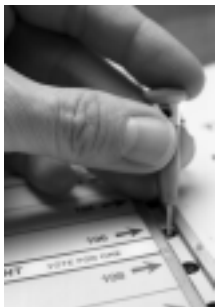
My two years as a member of the House Transportation Committee have seen approval of state funding for what I consider the two most critical long-term road projects in our legislative district.

Last year I **successfully pushed to fund initial work on the Cross-Base Highway** (State Route 704) in the 2003-05 transportation budget. This year I kept a commitment to the people of Yelm to secure funding in the supplemental transportation budget (which makes adjustments in the two-year budget) for **design and engineering work on the Yelm alternate route**. More money will be needed over the next several years to see these projects through to construction and completion, but I'm happy to report that the wheels are in motion.

Some good news on my other top-priority road project, the widening of Meridian Road (SR 161), came during the legislative session. The state Department of Transportation informed me the contract for widening the road between 204th and 176th streets had been awarded, and the job will be **completed between spring and fall of 2005**.

Of all the transportation projects I've supported for our district (a map is in my fall 2003 newsletter, <http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/campbell/newsreleases/Campbell03Nov.pdf>) these three will do the most to reduce congestion and improve safety. I'm very glad to see them under way.

A NEW PRIMARY FOR WASHINGTON VOTERS



This session the Legislature was forced to come up with a **replacement for the popular "blanket" primary** our state had used since 1936 to select candidates for the November general election. That's because the state's major political parties successfully sued to get rid of the blanket primary.

I co-sponsored the House version of the bill to enact the "Top 2" system, which is very similar to the blanket primary. The Senate's Top 2 bill passed, but the governor, who doesn't like the Top 2 system, vetoed the corresponding sections. That left only the backup plan — the Montana-style primary, which we had added to the legislation in case the Top 2 system was successfully challenged in court.

The Montana primary continues the tradition of giving all major parties a place on the November ballot, but it also requires voters to choose a ballot from only *one* party. That takes away the flexibility we've had all these years.

My goal was to have a primary the voters would recognize. Because I expect the governor's decision to be challenged in court, it's hard to say what September will bring.

MIXED RESULTS ON HEALTH CARE, LIABILITY REFORM

SMALL - GROUP COVER - AGE: Finally, the Legislature passed a bill (HB 2460) to give small employers more choice when it comes to buying health care coverage for themselves and their employees. I worked on what was called "small-group reform" for many years and was lead Republican sponsor of the legislation we adopted.



The new law gives employers who are struggling a chance to shop around for a lower cost plan, so they won't be faced with dropping their health plan completely, or asking their employees to pay higher premiums. It also gives small employers who can't afford to offer coverage a new level of access to plans that might be within their price range. That could mean **health-care benefits for thousands of Washington workers** who are now uninsured.

LIABILITY PROTECTION: Should licensed health providers be held liable when they volunteer their services at community health care clinics? I don't think so. I co-sponsored a bill that adds health care providers to the list of people covered by the state's Good Samaritan Act. I also co-sponsored a similar bill covering retired primary care providers who volunteer to serve low-income patients. Other than those bills, which became law, the Legislature did little to address the issue of liability.

As a member of the House Health Care Committee and the House Judiciary Committee, I was in a unique position to help develop a package of legislation to **reform our system for addressing damage claims**, or "torts." The House passed most of the 20-plus bills, but I am very dismayed to report that in spite of

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repeated calls by the governor for action, the Senate adjourned for the year without voting on most of that legislation.

That means we can expect to see a continued rise in the price of liability insurance, which makes it tough for medical professionals to stay in business and in turn reduces access to affordable health care.

DISCIPLINE FOR PROVIDERS: Speaking of health care providers, did you know five percent of them account for half of all complaints in our state? My bill to **streamline the state's health care disciplinary process and hold providers more accountable** received committee approval. Unfortunately, it didn't come before the full House for a vote.

INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

In 2003 I worked with the chairman of the House Capital Budget Committee to secure funding for a study of the Bridge for Kids in Orting. The study was finished before the 2004 session — the next step is to design the bridge.



I worked with the Bridge 4 Kids committee to **develop a request to fund the bridge design** (about \$1.3 million). Unfortunately, the supplemental capital budget adopted this year (which makes adjustments to the capital budget approved in 2003) couldn't cover a new request of that size. It's on my list for 2005.

I also asked for state money to go with a request for federal funding for a **new aquatics center for the Bethel community**. That request also must wait until next year, when the 2005-07 capital budget is put together.

CLAMPING DOWN ON CRIME

SEX CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN: The Legislature came through with tougher penalties for sex offenders this year by adopting the Child Protection Act of 2004. It **tightens the law against child molesters** and provides



I was happy to sponsor Lindsay Wood, a junior at Spanaway Lake High School, as a legislative page during the 2004 session. She was one of several 2nd District students who gave up a week of school to carry on a tradition that began in 1891. Students 14-16 years old with at least a C+ average may apply to be pages next year; please phone my office (360-786-7912) for more information.

major revisions to the state's Special Sex Offender Sentencing Alternative law (SSOSA), which in the past has allowed offenders to serve only up to six months in jail and then enter state-supervised treatment in the community, often to the horror of child victims and their families.

METHAMPHETAMINE PRODUCERS: Three years ago I supported a bill to restrict over-the-counter sales of substances like ephedrine, which are used in cold medicine but also are used by methamphetamine cooks. This year I co-sponsored a bill to **make it harder for retailers and wholesalers to sell these "precursor" drugs** in bulk out the back door to meth cooks. The House passed it, but a Senate committee refused to act on the bill.



2004 LEGISLATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE – HOW YOU VOTED

I received 703 replies to the questions I asked in my February newsletter, which is a fantastic return rate. Thank you! Here's how 2nd District residents responded, and the corresponding legislative action.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

"Economy and jobs" was ranked by 75% of those responding as the issue of greatest importance. "No new taxes" was second, followed by transportation, education, crime, the effect of medical malpractice insurance costs on access to health care, environment, primary voting system, and social services. **(Legislature did not raise taxes and passed several – although not nearly enough — measures intended to improve the economy and put people back to work)**

TAXES AND SPENDING

Should Washington keep the 60% "supermajority" requirement to pass bond issues and levies? More than 47% of those responding said yes; more than 35% were willing to change the Constitution to allow a simple majority vote for bonds and levies; 17% said keep the supermajority for bonds and allow a simple majority for levies. **(Legislature did not change the supermajority law)**

ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND JOB CREATION

- Increase small business tax credits — 81% agreed **(Legislature took no action)**
- Freeze the state's minimum wage — 63% disagreed **(Legislature took no action)**
- Extend existing business tax credits — 73% agreed **(Legislature extended credits)**
- Reduce regulatory red tape — 92% agreed **(Legislature took no action)**

REPLACING THE PRIMARY VOTING SYSTEM

- 34% favored a "modified blanket primary" like the "Top 2" system
- 31% favored a "closed primary" in which only registered party members participate, and parties pay the election cost
- 23% favored a "open primary, secret choice" like the system used in Montana
- 12% favored "ranked voting" that requires no primary and lets voters rank their choices on the November ballot

(Legislature approved bill I co-sponsored to enact a Top 2 system; governor's veto gives Washington a Montana-style primary)

RAISES FOR HOME HEALTH-CARE WORKERS

80% favored approving a contract between the state and approximately 26,000 home-care workers — private workers providing state services — negotiated under the terms of Initiative 775. The agreement includes a 50-cent raise for about 26,000 workers, makes them eligible for workers' compensation benefits, and allows them to join the state's Basic Health Plan. **(\$24 million to implement the contract is in the 2003-05 supplemental operating budget the Legislature passed. \$2.2 million more is included to give private-agency home-care workers a 50-cent raise)**

PUBLIC SAFETY

86% of responses favored making the manufacturing of meth a "strike" under the state's "Three Strikes" law. 9% said to increase penalties without making it a strike, and 5% said current laws are working fine. **(Legislature took no action)**

**CONTROLLING
TAXES AND MAKING
GOVERNMENT
WORK FOR YOU!**

PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

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REPRESENTATIVE

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